

MOROCCAN NEWS BULLETIN

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Washington, D. C.

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New York, Nov. 5, 1952

No. 2

PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT ON THE FUTURE OF MOROCCO

"Why does Morocco, inhabited by Moroccans, belong to France?
....Anything must be better, than to live under French colonial rule. Should a land belong to France? By what logic and by what custom and by what historical rule?"

"When we've won the war, I will work with all my might and main to see to it that the United States is not wheedled into the position of accepting any plan that will further France's imperialistic ambitions...."

From AS HE SAW IT, by Elliott Roosevelt
(Duell, Sloan & Pearce), 1946

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THE AMERICAN PRESS AND MOROCCO

Time (Oct. 20): "A group of Arab nationalists has confronted the U.N. General Assembly with one of those practical moral and political problems which make the United Nations a genuine world forum. Since the United States will have a decisive voice in the debate, the problem is one for all Americans: What is the United States attitude towards modern colonialism?"

N.Y. Times (Oct. 27): "The French commentators this week who accused the United States of voting against France in order to win the sympathy of the Arab world were unjust and obtuse. Our intentions were good; we evidently wanted to be in a position to exercise a calming and restraining influence on the Arab-Asian bloc and to be where we could help France most effectively.

"One ought to be able to point out that France is not being as reasonable and cooperative these days as she might be. Monkey-wrenches are being tossed into the machinery of Western European unity. It is France which is balking at the European Defense Community plan and France which is keeping an unyielding grip on the Suez.

"It is France, again, which is trying to hold back the tide of nationalism in North Africa. One can concede the great mission that France is fulfilling in Tunisia and Morocco, the strategic value of the North African coast, the rights of French residents. This does not alter the fact that nationalism has become an irresistible force, and the problem is to turn it into creative and constructive channels.

"But however one looks at it, there is no cause for the French to get outraged and to feel that they are not appreciated or that the Americans are leaving them in the lurch. A little less sensitivity and a little more trust on the part of France would do much for Franco-American relations."

Times Star, Cincinnati (Oct. 17): "The French are deeply suspicious that the United States will favor independence for the colonies.....The United States has several motives in risking such a division at this time..... We are aware of the intense nationalist feeling in North Africa and its clamor for expression via United Nations. We regard the U.N. Assembly as a free debating society, especially since Russia has strangled discussion in the Security Council by her veto power."

Anne O'Hare McCormick, in N.Y. Times (Oct. 27): "French fears are intensified by the attitude of the United States....Assurances that Washington has not thought of letting France down in this affair do not soothe French injured feelings, which are significantly reflected in the rising demand for a strengthening of the Franco-British alliance....French resentment to the 'obstructive' tactics of Britain is diluted by currents in favor of closer partnership in Africa, and in standing up to America."

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THE FRENCH PRESS AND THE MOROCCAN QUESTION AT THE UNITED NATIONS

France-Tireur (Independent daily): "The vote is cast, and the Quai d'Orsay is in a state of perpetual anger; first of all an attitude of great surprise is adopted....To be defended in North Africa, democracy must first of all exist there, otherwise we are in a position that is dangerous for France, threatened by its adversaries, but also embarrassed by its allies."

Le Monde (Independent daily): "A high American official told us: 'It would be a real catastrophe if France decided to withdraw from the debates after denying the competence of the U.N. Assembly.' Evidently the gulf between Washington and Paris is pretty wide."

Liberation (Independent daily): "We should not be facing today the painful spectacle of France standing as the accused before the United Nations, had we, at the proper time, tried to come to an honest and loyal agreement with the Moroccans; and had we granted them the reforms we had promised, and led them towards autonomy."

France-Tireur (Independent daily): "What has harmed our country most is the policy of our own governments. Is it not paradoxical for us to resent the United Nation's intervention in North Africa, while appealing to the solidarity of the United Nations to help us to escape from the morass of Indo-China?"

Mr. René Moreux, Deputy to the French National Assembly, in Marchés coloniaux (Weekly economic review): "It is imperative to find immediately a general solution for the Moroccan problem. The mistake we committed last December in regard to Tunisia must not be repeated. There is no room for ideological controversies nor for a blind adherence to diplomatic texts in the future negotiations between France and a Protectorate which must be ABOLISHED." (capitals are the author's own).

Mr. Claude Bourdet, in L'Observateur (Political weekly): "Mr. Walter, the most important French industrialist in Morocco, has recently stated that the French Army and Police will not be able to protect the lives and property of the French against an uprising of the natives emerging from their abominable 'bidonvilles'. Mr. Marcel Boussac," (the richest and most powerful industrialist in France) "is alleged to have made similar statements. Men like Walter and, possibly, Boussac represent a modern capitalism, which is well equipped, technically progressive even if socially reactionary, and in any case capable of paying decent wages. But in Morocco these men form a very small minority. Practically the entire French capitalism in Morocco thrives on the sweat of the natives. It could not exist otherwise. It consists of exploiters with inadequate technical means, incapable of modern methods and anxious for speedy returns. In the agricultural sphere many of them are veritable parasites who, without tending personally their land, are trying to squeeze out of it exorbitant profits. For all these people, as well as for the petty officials and French employees the continuation of the present colonial status and of the intensive exploitation of the Moroccans is a matter of life and death. It is precisely they, and their spokesmen in Paris who keep the administration in their hands, and who impose their views on the French Government..... The French parties of the Center and the Right, especially the Radical party, are infested with the lobbyists of the French 'colons' (settlers) in Morocco. "It has become obvious that the only hope for France as well as for North Africa is an open debate in the United Nations Assembly. I hope with all my heart that a decision will be taken to send out to Morocco, as soon as possible an international mission which will be able to proclaim the full truth on the Moroccan situation, and which will force the French people to open their eyes and to realize what, for many years, has been done in their name."

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MOROCCO AND THE UNITED NATIONS ASSEMBLY

Though the Moroccan question has not reached yet the General Assembly of the United Nations, it has been debated almost daily in the Fourth Committee, where the delegates of various Arab nations presented the case for the Moroccans.

We print below extracts from the speeches of both the French and the Arab delegates, according to subject matter:

TRADE UNIONS

Mr. Pignon (France): "French proposals with regard to trade unionism in Morocco had been rejected by the Sultan, but....Moroccans were free to join existing trade unions."

Mr. Khalidi (Iraq) Vice-Chairman of the Committee: "It was well known that the French Administration had fought the establishment of trade unions in Morocco....There had been many attempts to establish trade unions, but they had been rejected by the indigenous inhabitants because of the conditions imposed by the French Administration, one of which was that half the members of the central committee should be French and another that agricultural workers should not participate. The former condition obviously could not be accepted by any self-respecting people and the second was unjust. The French had imposed those conditions precisely because they knew they would not be accepted."

WAGES AND TAXES

Mr. Pignon (France): "There was no discriminatory practice with regard to wages which depended solely on qualifications....The fiscal burden was very fairly distributed among the elements of the population and the European community was not in any way spared."

Mr. Mikaoui (Lebanon): "As regards family allowances, the allowance paid for one European child was equal to that paid for eight Moroccan children. Similar discrimination existed in the field of taxation. In direct taxes, Europeans were granted a general rebate of 50% which Moroccans received in exceptional cases only. Discrimination in salaries was equally flagrant; the wages of foreign laborers were always higher than those of Moroccans."

HEALTH AND HOUSING

Mr. Pignon (France): "With regard to hygiene and public health... the Moroccan population had doubled in forty years, which spoke well for French public health policy. With regard to housing, a great deal had been done by the authorities."

Mr. Mikaoui (Lebanon): "There was one hospital bed for every 250 Europeans, but only one hospital bed for every 1,250 Moroccans. Between 1942 and 1950 European housing in Morocco had increased by one dwelling unit for every 210 persons, while housing for Moroccans had increased by one dwelling unit for 15,000 persons."

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

Mr. Pignon (France): "The printing and sale of publications was free. Any person in enjoyment of his civil rights could establish a newspaper or periodical."

Mr. Mikaoui (Lebanon): "A European who wished to publish a periodical merely had to file an application, while a Moroccan required authorization by decree."

Mr. Khalidy (Iraq): "There was no freedom of the press; some news that was printed in the French newspapers was not allowed to appear in the Arabic newspapers."

CORRECTNESS OF FIGURES

Mr. Mikaoui: "The French representatives, in an effort to discredit the facts he had cited, had accused him of obtaining them from the newspapers of the opposition party....The figures he had quoted were confirmed in a document entitled 'International Conciliation' written by Rom Landau and published by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, New York."

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MOROCCO AS SEEN BY AN AMERICAN RESIDENT

"I have been watching the works of the French here for a considerable period, and have almost reached the limit of endurance. The French occupation of Morocco is a disgrace to the Christian world. By abetting it the United States will share in the disgrace. I have seen poverty and oppression in many parts of the world, but never anywhere worse than here. The poverty is bad enough, but the complete denial of elementary human rights is much worse.

"Thousands of Moroccans are unemployed, and most of those who are employed live from hand to mouth. This is hardly surprising, since their base pay is about thirteen cents an hour. Yet hundreds of French are brought here to fill jobs created by American construction.

"There is no legal code here. At the pleasure of the occupation authorities, people may be thrown into prison for being nationalists, for closing their shops, for not working on the land of French colonists-land which was more than likely acquired fraudulently. Religious leaders are fined or imprisoned for thanking God for the freedom of Libya and praying for the liberation of Morocco. A learned doctor of Moslem law was jailed for citing the example of Joan of Arc in one of his classes.

"The force and fraud by which the French established themselves in Morocco were excused by the hypocritical promise to conduct the country toward political maturity. Actually, the consistent policy of the occupation is to prevent the Moroccans from ever achieving such maturity, and the lengths to which the authorities go to attain their ends are almost unbelievable.

Robert Henryson in America (the Catholic Weekly, N.Y.
Oct. 25, 1952)

Mr. ALLAL el FASSI,

leader of the Moroccan Istiqlal (Independence) Party, has recently arrived in New York.

Statement by Mr. Balafrej, Co-founder and Secretary General of the Istiqlal (Independence) Party of Morocco.

"Secretary of State Acheson made clear his belief that no one can dispute the right of a dependent people to ultimate self-government. However, France has never clearly adopted such a concept toward North Africa. All reforms proposed by France have had as their objective the destruction of the political and juridical personality of the Protectorate in North Africa."

HYPOCRISY OR MACHIAVELLISM

On November 13, 1951, M. Robert Schuman, French Foreign Secretary, stated officially in the United Nations Assembly in Paris:

"There has been established a confident collaboration not only between the French representative and His Majesty the Sultan, but also in town as well as in rural districts. Negotiations between France and H.M. the Sultan continue....We encourage the active and ever more widening cooperation of young Moroccans in the direction of public affairs."

On October 2, 1952 His Majesty the Sultan published his official review of Franco-Moroccan relations during the preceding two years. In it he stated:

"In view of the divergence between Our views and those of the French Government....and the absence of the negotiations the initiations of which We so earnestly desired, We submitted to the Government of the French Republic another Memorandum (March 14, 1952). Our proposals aim at the attainment of the ideal objective of enabling the Moroccan people to administer the affairs of the country...On September 17, 1952, the French Government transmitted to Us its reply....It reiterated its determination to maintain the Protectorate Treaty in force....In a reply sent to the French Government on October 3, 1952, We expressed Our deep regret that it had not seen fit to accept Our proposals."

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THE TRUE RULERS OF MOROCCO

"Since the end of World War II, the powerful, well-heeled 'colons', the 'colonists', have rejected the proposal of every French Foreign Minister to institute administrative and governmental reforms in Morocco...The colonists and their collective lobby insist that the only way to handle demands for reform and/or independence lies in the show of force. That technique has been a miserable failure in Tunisia, where the demands of the local nationalists have been far more moderated than the Moroccans'.....Led by the colonists, French officialdom looks suspiciously at American intentions in Morocco.... So each time an American suggestion of conciliation is made, the French apply the screws a little harder, locally."

Seymour Freidin and William Richardson,
in New York Post (Oct. 21, 1952)

COMMUNISM IN MOROCCO

"The French try to create the impression among the native population that, for fear of communism, the United States will support the French occupation against the aspirations of the Moroccans. Communism is a French importation. The religion of the country is as much opposed to its doctrines as is the Catholic Church. Were this not true, Morocco would be a fertile field, for it is easy to understand that the people would welcome anything that would rid them of the French."

Robert Henryson in America (Oct. 25, 1952)

"So far the Communist influence in Moroccan turbulence is mainly an export of the French Communist Party to the Protectorate. There are few homegrown communists, but there has been a steady influx of French Communists to the country, and, significantly, since the United States started building the air bases. They are busily engaged in penetrating the trade unions."

Seymour Freidin and William Richardson,
in New York Post (Oct. 21, 1952)

THE MEETING OF THE SO-CALLED MUNICIPAL REFORMS IN MOROCCO

"The attack against Moroccan sovereignty has come in the guise of democratic municipal reform, which envisages the creation of municipal councils consisting of elected French and Moroccan representatives. Although the French population represents only 5% of the population, it is proposed that the French be given 50% of the seats on these councils. However, the most objectionable aspect of the proposed reform is the thought of endowing the French residents in Morocco with the right of franchise, while they still retain their foreign citizenship. The Moroccan people have no objection to the participation of French and other European residents of Morocco in the political institutions of the country so long as they do so on the basis of equality and as citizens of Morocco enjoying no special privileges. However, this is not provided for by the so-called municipal reform, which is no more than a blatant infringement upon Moroccan sovereignty. It sets the stage for co-sovereignty and eventually for the complete subversion of Moroccan sovereignty which is guaranteed by the Treaty of Fez. In view of these considerations, it is little wonder that H.M. the Sultan has steadfastly refused to approve this so-called reform."

Al-Istiqlal, (Oct. 25, 1952)

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THE TREASON OF THE INTELLECTUALS

Andre Maurois, the famous French writer, has recently made the following statement: "The rights of Moroccans are infinitely respectable. Equality for all, regardless of color, race or creed, is an objective France herself was the first one to uphold. But one shouldn't forget that the French too have rights in the territories concerned. This has nothing to do with colonialism, a system we have repudiated long ago."

We have asked Mr. Rom Landau, the British authority on Morocco, who happens to be visiting New York, whether he had anything to say about the statement of his French colleague. This is what Mr. Rom Landau said, "Only a knave or a fool, ignorant of the true conditions in Morocco, could say that the French regime in Morocco has nothing to do with colonialism. Since M. Maurois is anything but a fool, I can only assume that he is one of those intellectuals who are willing to betray their calling by sacrificing truth for political purposes. This is the famous 'trahison des clercs' of which the French author Julien Benda wrote long before the last war. M. Maurois is far too intelligent not to realize that suppression of elementary human rights such as is the distinguishing mark of the present French regime in Morocco denotes nineteenth century colonialism at its worst. He must surely know that for the Moroccans 'rights' and 'equality' exist only in French propaganda pronouncements. In reality, the Moroccan has no freedom to travel within his own country, no freedom of speech or assembly, no freedom to form his own trade unions. He can be arrested without a warrant, can be imprisoned without trial, can be held indefinitely in solitary confinement without being informed what his offense is. I respect M. Maurois' patriotism. But I feel that the only master whom, as an intellectual he should have obeyed, is Truth."

AMERICAN AIR BASES IN MOROCCO

"Dealing with the temperamental French authorities and protracted delays in placing them have hampered the work. Wrangling over the interpretation of the secret technical agreement signed by France and the U.S.A.... Contractors here say that it is useless for an American to expect to have work done at the same speed and efficiency found at home. They say that permitting the French to select their workers is also a disadvantage, and that the French have the right to investigate every payment of \$3,000 or more. They point to the case of a French commandant who ordered the American flagpole to be taken down and shortened because it was two inches higher than the French flagpole at the same base."

Henry Wales, in Chicago Tribune (Oct. 12, '52)

THE FUTURE IN MOROCCO

"Morocco is very calm, too calm, in my opinion. For we must expect grave events which will have nothing in common with those in Tunisia. The Berber parts of the country, on which the French settlers rely so much, have common cause with the Sultan. The Berbers will not hesitate to take up arms; and the urban proletariat will follow their example. It is enough to recall the grandiose manifestations in honor of the Sultan during his recent visit to Casablanca. Warn the politicians, for we are moving towards a catastrophe. The Moroccans will hate us without discrimination, and will do everything to chase us out of their country.... We have to look at the Moroccan problem with the eyes of 1952 and not with those of 1912. You, in France, still have the means for action. Act, for much innocent blood will flow because of blindness and selfishness."

From the letter of a French resident in Morocco published in the Paris review.

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A STATEMENT BYThe AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN MOROCCOMember of the United States Chamber of Commerce.United States Trade and Finance are Entitled to be Treated
Identically with those of France in the French Zone of Morocco

This Chamber has persistently advocated Economic Liberty in Morocco and has insisted that American economic relations with Morocco be on a basis of complete equality with those of France. We have always maintained that such liberty and equality are dictated by Treaties between the United States, France and Morocco.

On August 27, 1952, the International Court of Justice unanimously confirmed our views in a Decision which asserted: "In economic matters France is accorded no privileged position in the principle of economic liberty without any inequality on which the Act of Algiers is based." The decision specifically confirmed the United States' "right to be treated as favorably as France in so far as economic matters in Morocco are concerned."

The Court's decision should have been enforced immediately. It has not been enforced, nor has any attempt been made to effectively establish the equality to which the United States is entitled, nor to relinquish the preferential position which France has seized in spite of her treaty commitments and which is retained in direct conflict with the Court's findings.

Protectorate authorities have decreed new legislation, effective October 10th. This legislation partially removes the restrictions formerly placed on imports from the United States, but places other restrictions on the proceeds of sales of such imports. These effectively curtail imports from the United States without curtailing imports from France. Under this new legislation an importer may import goods from the United States but may not repatriate his capital and profits after having sold such goods.

In effect, the importer from the United States must accept a forced, blocked investment in exchange for his goods, which is not required of the importer from France. This obviously restricts trade with the United States in a manner which does not apply equally to trade with France, in patent violation of the Court's decision.

The new legislation makes no pretense of eliminating the present discriminations which handicap exports to and investments from the United States. Exports to the United States are subjected to formalities and authorizations which do not apply to exports to France.

Again ignoring the Court's insistence on economic liberty, the new legislation specifically protects two cartels (Flour and Edible Oils). Both enjoy a favored position which allows them to maintain excessive prices which rob the Moroccan people of billions of francs every year.

These and other monopolies which violate the principle of economic liberty still flourish despite the Court's verdict. French Moroccan Officials show a determination to continue them, and to preserve the system under which their decisions and selections rather than competition determine the pattern of Moroccan economy and who shall succeed in it.

It is obvious that France has no intention of abiding by the Court's decision, nor of restoring the economic liberty and equal treatment to which the United States is entitled in Morocco.

This continues a situation which for almost four years has deprived the United States and its citizens of the normal business development to which they are entitled in Morocco, and has forced many Americans to abandon the Moroccan field to their French competitors.

Apart from considerations of law and justice and of our immediate interests, we believe that the establishment of a free economy in Morocco, when

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its results are compared with those of neighboring regimented economies, will gain millions of converts to the free enterprise system.

We urge that all necessary action be taken to enforce the Court's verdict at once.

We also ask that full indemnity be collected for losses caused Americans through the past and future failure of French Moroccan Officials to comply with their treaty obligations as defined by the Court.

We believe that France's refusal to comply with the decree of the International Court should be brought to the attention of the United Nations Security Council in compliance with Article 94 of the United Nations Charter.

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Dr. El Mehdi Ben-Ahmed (M. B.), representative of the Independence
Party of Morocco in the United States of America, is so registered
at the Department of Justice, Washington, where copies of this
material are being filed and where his registration statement is
available for inspection. The fact of registration does not indicate
approval or disapproval by the United States Government of the
contents of this petition.

Readers of this Bulletin interested in the Moroccan problem
may obtain further material from

The Moroccan Delegation
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